(c) The following steps have been taken by the BSNL to check black marketing of SIM Cards:—

(i) SIM Cards are being distributed strictly as per waiting list maintained in States like Bihar, Jharkhand & U.P.

(ii) Unsold SIM Cards are deactivated after a stipulated period of issue.

(iii) Strict observance of customer verification before issue of SIM Cards.

(iv) Surprise inspection of all franchisee outlets/Customer Service Centres (CSCs) by vigilance cell.

Further, BSNL has taken steps to expand its countrywide cellular network by an additional capacity of 14 million lines to take capacity to around 23 million by year-end. Thereafter, SIM Cards are expected to be available on demand.

Promotion of NIXI

3744. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have promoted National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the functions of the exchange;

(c) whether NIXI has started functioning; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the achievements made by NIXI to provide improve Internet Services in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) has been set up at 4 locations within the country viz. Chennai, Mumbai, Noida and Kolkata and are collocated with Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). Functions of NIXI are:—

— It acts as the meeting point of the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in India. Its main purpose is to facilitate exchange of domestic Internet traffic between the peering ISPs.

(c) Yes, Sir. NIXI has started functioning.

(d) Presently NIXI has 40 members covering 22 ISPs at the 4 locations. Achievements made by NIXI are:—

— BetterQuality of Internet service by reduction of delay in Internet traffic exchanged between two ISPs.

— Saving cost of International Bandwidth.

— Improved Security as the traffic remains with in the country.

Increase in Call charges of MTNL

3745. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that w.e.f. 1st April, 2005, calls on MTNL network would be charged @ Rs. *2/-* per call with pulse rate of 120 sec. Instead of Rs. 1.20/- with the Pulse rate of 60 seconds; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the increase in call charges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Sir, with effect from 1st April 2005, pulse rate & tariffs have been revised for local PCO only in MTNL Delhi to meet the increased cost of providing service. The old and revised traffic plans are as follows;

Type of local PCO	Pulse rate in Seconds		Call charges in rupees		Commission to PCO holder in rupees	
	Old	Revised	Old	Revised	Old	Revised
Private PCO with EPBT	90	120	1.20	2.00	0.40	0.60
Private CCB	90	120	1.00	2.00	0.40	0.60
Handicapped with EPBT	90	120	1.20	2.00	0.40	0.60
Departmental CCB	60	60	1.00	1.00	Nit	Nil

NOTE: Private CCB, PCOs are being replaced by normal telephone sets.

EPBT—Electronic Push Button Telephone.

CCB—Coin Collection Box.